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General Assembly
Sixty-second session

Official Records

85th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 4 March 2008, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kerim ..... (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 132 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/62/657/Add.2 and Add.3)

The President: I should like to invite the attention of the General Assembly to documents A/62/657/Add.2 and Add.3, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communications contained in documents A/62/657 and Add.1, Palau and Papua New Guinea have made the necessary payments to reduce their arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in those documents?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 64 (*continued*)

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Draft resolution (A/62/L.29/Rev.1)

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/62/621)

The President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held the debate on agenda item 64 and its sub-items (a) and (b) jointly with agenda item 47 at the 27th to 29th plenary meetings, on 18 and 19 October 2007.

At its 78th plenary meeting, on 19 December 2007, the Assembly adopted draft resolution A/62/L.10/Rev.1 under sub-item (a) of agenda item 64 (*resolution 62/179*).

The Assembly now has before it draft resolution A/62/L.29/Rev.1. The report of the Fifth Committee on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/62/L.29 is contained in document A/62/621, and we are informed that the same implications apply to draft resolution A/62/L.29/Rev.1.

I now give the floor to the representative of Antigua and Barbuda to introduce draft resolution A/62/L.29/Rev.1.

Mr. Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda): It is my honour, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, to introduce to the General Assembly the draft resolution entitled "Modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs", contained in document A/62/L.29/Rev.1.

Since the launch of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), much has been achieved by way of sustainable development in African countries. NEPAD continues to represent the collective determination and commitment of African countries to

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take control of their own sustainable economic and social development.

In December 2007, the General Assembly reaffirmed its decision to hold a high-level meeting on the theme "Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward" during its sixty-third session. As Chairman of the Group of 77 and China, I am particularly pleased that the General Assembly now has the opportunity to come to unanimous agreement on the modalities and format of that event, given its importance and significance.

If the developing world is to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, it is vital that we pay particular attention to the special needs of Africa and the importance of implementing commitments made to African countries.

The draft resolution is a straightforward one, with a short preamble recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome, as well as General Assembly resolution 60/265. It further recalls the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2001 of the Economic and Social Council, entitled "The role of the United Nations in support of the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development". The draft resolution also reaffirms the special needs of Africa, while noting that the implementation of commitments made to and by African countries will contribute to the continent's achievement of the MDGs by 2015.

The draft resolution also sets the date, format and level of the meeting, the latter being at the highest political level, including heads of State or Government, and decides that the meeting will result in a political declaration on Africa's development needs. It also mandates the United Nations to consult closely with the African Union in preparing for the meeting. Further, the draft resolution before us requests the Secretary-General to submit to the meeting a comprehensive report containing recommendations on "Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward" in consultation with United Nations development agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions and other relevant regional and institutional institutions.

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to thank all Member States for supporting the draft resolution as an expression of their commitment to strengthening international cooperation to achieve sustainable development in Africa, and I personally hope that the General Assembly will adopt the resolution by consensus.

In concluding, I wish to note that the draft resolution is open for co-sponsorship. I should like to thank those delegations that have sponsored the draft resolution and invite others to do likewise.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/62/L.29/Rev.1, entitled "Modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs".

Israel has joined the list of sponsors of the draft resolution.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/62/L.29/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/62/L.29/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 62/242).

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Slovenia to speak, on behalf of the European Union, in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted. May I remind her that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mrs. Ghosh (Slovenia): The European Union (EU) welcomes the adoption of resolution 62/242 on modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs.

Africa is at the heart of the European Union's external relations and development agenda. The joint EU-Africa strategy recently agreed at the EU-Africa summit in Lisbon, Portugal, represents a qualitative step forward in our partnership. We are confident that the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs will contribute in an important way to the global awareness of the wider partnerships and initiatives with and among African countries and to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa.

The European Union would like to thank the facilitator and all negotiating partners for the flexibility they showed during informal consultations. The European Union agreed to a high-level meeting resulting in a political declaration on the explicit understanding that the political declaration will be a short text, similar to resolution 57/2.

The European Union also welcomes the language in paragraph 6, which gives the mandate to prepare the first draft and decide on the timing of the informal consultations to the President of the General Assembly. The European Union attaches great importance to the fact that the negotiations on the political declaration shall not in any way pre-empt the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development. The European Union would prefer a process, led by two co-facilitators, that does not take place parallel to the informal consultations on financing for development.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

I now call on the representative of Cape Verde.

Mrs. Pires (Cape Verde): I should like at the outset to convey the apologies of my Permanent Representative, Mr. Antonio Monteiro Lima, for his inability to attend today's meeting, owing to a major reason. Permit me to read out, on his behalf, the following statement in his capacity as Chair of the African Group for this month.

> "I have the honour to speak on behalf of the African Group. The African Group aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China at the 80th meeting.
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> "The African Group warmly welcomes today's adoption by the General Assembly of the important resolution entitled 'Modalities, format and organization of the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs'. By adopting that resolution, the Assembly has responded to resolutions 61/229 of 22 December 2006 and 62/179 of 19 December 2007, on the New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support.
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> "At the midway point for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and despite progress made in several areas, Africa remains the only continent that is not on track to meet the MDGs by 2015. Even in countries that have made important progress towards achieving the MDGs, large swathes of the population are trapped in extreme poverty. It is estimated that more than 40 per cent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa now lives in extreme poverty, surviving on less than $1 a day.
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> "We hope that the high-level meeting will help to refocus attention on Africa, will review and assess the scope and adequacy of international support for Africa's development and will conduct a dialogue with Africa's development partners, including the United Nations system, with a view to scaling up support for Africa and making recommendations on actions to be taken by the international community to enhance support for the implementation of all commitments to the development of the continent that were reaffirmed by world leaders at the 2005 World Summit and the Group of Eight Summit held at Gleneagles.
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> "We reaffirm the importance of the New Partnership for Africa's Development as the framework for Africa's development and of the role of the United Nations in supporting its implementation.
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> "On behalf of the African Group, I would like to thank our development partners and all delegations for actively and collaboratively participating in the consultations and for their constructive approach, which helped us to reach a consensus on this resolution. Let me also take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the facilitator, Mr. Peter Le Roux, representative of South Africa, and to the coordinator, Mr. Abdellah Benmellouk, representative of Morocco, for their tireless efforts in successfully leading the consultations on this resolution.
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> "Finally, in order to ensure a fruitful outcome for the high-level meeting, the African Group invites Member States to engage actively in the preparatory process and consultations with a view to an early consensual agreement on the expected outcome. We invite stakeholders to endeavour to be represented at the highest level possible so as to allow for rich and focused deliberations."

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 64 and of agenda item 64 as a whole?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.